THE EXTENSION HORTICULTURIST.

April 1, 1924.

Ten thousand Mississippi homes were kept supplied with fresh vegetables every month last year as a result of a unique contest, the object of which was to have available at least two vegetables fresh from the garden, every day of the year. This contest was launched by Mr. W. H. Fristoe, Vegetable Specialist of the State College Extension Service and was supervised by the Home Demonstration Agents. The following pages contain a brief report of how this state-wide home vegetable garden contest was conducted.

Office of Horticultural Investigations
and Extension Service Cooperating,
U. S. Department of Agriculture,
Washington, D. C.

YEAR-ROUND VEGETABLE GARDENS.

Vegetable gardens are valuable to the extent that they provide fresh vegetables for the family table during the greatest possible number of days in the year. One of the great difficulties, especially in the Southern States, has been to interest the people in giving the garden the proper attention throughout the year and in providing fresh vegetables during the winter and the mid-summer months. The plan adopted by the Extension forces of the State of Mississippi, seems to come nearer accomplishing the desired result by means of year-round gardens than any scheme that has so far been brought to our attention.

According to the report submitted by Mr. H. W. Fristoe, Extension Vegetable Specialist of Mississippi, the year-round vegetable garden campaign in that State is being conducted under the direction of the Home Demonstration Agents and is supported by the women's clubs, business men's associations, civic organizations, the seedsmen, the agricultural papers and the local press. The work is conducted in the form of a contest known as the "Year-round garden contest," starting with February 1 and ending January 31. During the year just completed, there were enrolled 5,000 white families and 5,000 colored families in this contest. For 1924-1925, the contest which began February 1, it is expected to have between 15,000 and 20,000 families completing the work.

During the year 1923-1924, about $300 in prizes, in the form of money and merchandise was awarded, these prizes being contributed by seed firms, agricultural papers, merchants' associations and other organizations. The prize list was divided into three parts. Number (1) consisting of five prizes ranging from $50 to $1, was awarded to the home demonstration agents in the State who turned in the highest percentage of completed record cards, this percentage being based on the number of farms in each county competing. In number (2) eleven prizes were offered ranging from $25 downward to $1 , and were awarded to the county council, composed of representatives from all of the women's clubs in the county which turned in a statement showing they had rendered the greatest amount of support to the home garden contest in their county. In number (3) three prizes ranging from $25 to $10 were awarded to individual gardeners for the best all year-round garden in the State.

The requirements for competition in the contest are, first, production of at least two vegetables in the garden each month during the year, second, the home demonstration agent in each county must submit to the Extension Office a statement showing the value per acre of the products, third, accompanying this statement, there must be a record card and one or more 8 X 10 pictures of the garden.

Regions to Which All-Year Gardens are adapted.

The plan being promoted by Mr. Fristoe in Mississippi, is especially applicable to the Southern States and in parts of the Pacific Coast territory. In the north central section the contests should be planned on the basis of lengthening the period for use of fresh vegetables by supplementing the outdoor garden with hotbeds and coldframes and suitable storage facilities for the care of the vegetables grown during the late summer. The contest can doubtless be best conducted under the direction of the home demonstration agents wherever these agents are employed in the counties. It will be noted that the prizes are distributed between the home demonstration agents, the women's clubs that lend the greatest support to the movement, and to the gardeners themselves. This makes the proposition somewhat of a popularity contest and one section or county will compete with another to make the best showing for their respective demonstration agent or group of workers. Where there are no demonstration agents the contest could very properly be conducted under the direction of a leader appointed by the Federated Women's Clubs.

In our judgment, any movement for better homes that does not take into consideration the home garden, home orchard, small fruits and the landscape plantings about the home, will fall short of its goal. One has but to go into many of the farming sections of the country to be impressed with the utter barrenness of the surroundings of many farm homes. The remedy for this condition is easily within the grasp of the majority of the people living in the county, as well as those living in the smaller towns and villages. The matter resolves itself largely into one of leadership and of securing someone in each community who will not only make a demonstration, but aid others in improving their own surroundings and living conditions.

The plan as outlined by Mr. Fristoe, that is, of encouraging the production of at least two vegetables in the garden all the year round, is to be recommended especially throughout the Southern States. The organization of the work is clearly one for the Extension forces, but contacts should be made and the work conducted in cooperation with the women's clubs and backed by the newspapers and business interests.

The offering of prizes, to be awarded on a percentage basis, is highly commendable and has a great stimulating effect. The popularity feature of the contest also lends personal interest and will help to put it across in a large way. It is now the proper time to stage contests of this character in all of the central or middle northern states, in fact, the work could still be started in the Southern States, making May 1, for example, the starting point for the year.

R E G I S T R A T I O N C A R D

for

HOME GARDEN CONTEST

February 1, 1924 - January 31, 1925.

To be kept by contestant and handed to the County Home Demonstration Agent at the close of the contest. Full report to be attached.

Name of Contestant_____

Address_____County_____

REGULATIONS FOR HOME GARDEN CONTEST.

Upon recommendation of the committee appointed to consider the Garden Contest, the following rules will be used in this contest during the year:

1. This contest is open to Home Demonstration Agents only, and to home gardeners within the respective counties of these Demonstration Agents.

2. Each Agent must have 50 gardens in her county, as a minimum number, covering a twelve months period, to be eligible.

3. These gardens must be bona fide home gardens for the production of vegetables for family consumption.

4. The gardens must be so planned that at least two vegetables may be placed fresh on the table of the family every day during the twelve months, if the tastes of the family so require.

5. This contest is to run from February 1, 1924 through January 31, 1925.

6. At least 60% of enrollment must come from farms.

H. W. Fristoe,
Extension Vegetable Specialist.
Mississippi.

APPROVED:
Susie V. Powell,
Assistant Director of Extension, in Charge Home Demonstration Work.

Report on Outlook for Year.

According to the March 26 number of The Official Record of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, the general agricultural outlook for 1924 indicates that farmers are undertaking a normal production program. This statement is based on current information and upon reports from 43,000 farmers representing every agricultural county in the country. It is apparent, however, according to the statement that agricultural production this year will still be attended by the difficulties arising from high wages and other costs, loss of farm workers and the general disparity between prices of farm and urban products.

Extension workers along horticultural lines will do well to heed the warning contained in this report and arrange their work in accordance with the general suggestion. The report above referred to further states: "Domestic demand for agricultural products is at a high level. Urban prosperity is reflected in a heavy current consumption of fibers and high quality foods and this may be expected to continue into the summer. *** The situation this season with respect to labor, machinery, fertilizer, credit and other cost itmes is not such as to favor any expansion in production."

With these points before us, would it not be proper for every extension worker to lay stress upon quality production and the planting of a normal acreage of most horticultural crops? In the case of the commercial orchard, attention to thorough spraying, conservative use of fertilizers and the proper handling of the crop, will constitute a constructive program. In the case of commercial vegetable growing, the planting of a normal acreage of the leading crops with special attention to the supplying of the local markets, should in our judgment be advocated. More direct selling of the products of the orchard and garden will result in a reduction of the present disparity between the price paid by the consumer and that received by the grower.

National Garden Week.

Farmers everywhere should be encouraged to give more attention to their home gardens to the end that their families may have more fresh vegetables on their tables than in the past. The same is true of the home orchard and of the small fruits. Seventy-five or eighty per cent of the living for the farm family can and should be produced right on the farm and the quality of the living depends largely upon the methods of production.

National Garden Week, conducted by the General Federation of Women's Clubs, has been set for April 20 to 26. During this week it is planned to have a program carried out in the schools, in the churches by civic organizations, and by every agency whereby the matter of having more and better home gardens can be brought to the attention of the people. It is anticipated that extension men will lend aid wherever possible in this campaign. Copies of the program for National Garden Week, can be secured by addressing Mrs. John D. Sherman, General Federation of Women's Clubs, 1734 N. Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

Dwarf Apple Trees Again.

Nurserymen believe in the use of dwarf apple trees for planting in the home orchard and are propagating and selling thousands of them each year, giving a choice of 41 varieties besides 4 of crabapples. This we learned from replies received from twenty nurserymen to date. Eleven of these nurserymen give special attention to propagating dwarf apple trees. Furthermore, the price is not prohibitive, being from 65¢ to $1.25 per single tree and $50 to $90 per hundred trees.

Most of the nurserymen use Doucin stocks. One nurseryman reports using from 5,000 to 10,000 Paradise stocks upon which to grow apple trees for backyard planting. The dwarf apple tree industry is really growing, even though some of the extension fruit men think not enough experimenting has been done to date. We still believe that we are right in encouraging the use of dwarf apple trees on Doucin stocks in the home orchard, except in the very cold sections of the country.

The varieties mentioned by five or more nurserymen are Baldwin, Delicious, Early Harvest, McIntosh, Northern Spy, Oldenburg, Red Astrachan, Rhode Island Greening, Sweet Bough and Yellow Transparent.

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Horticultural Extension Literature Received During March 1924.

Connecticut Agricultural College, Storrs.
- Spraying (1924 Revision) Bul. No. 70, February, 1924.
- Apple Spray Schedule.
- Peach Schedule.

Delaware University, Newark.
- A Program of Control Measures for some of the Disease and Insect Pests of the Orchard. Ext. Cir. No. 13, March 1924.
- Plant Diseases and their Prevalence for 1923 in Delaware. Ext. Cir. No. 14, March, 1924.

Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge.
- Two Acres of Peppers Net Grower $2,434.94 in 1922. Ext. Cir.H-110.
- Louisiana Red Tomato. Ext. Cir. H-111.
- Popular Varieties of Vegetables for Truck Crops. Ext.Cir. H-113.
- Rhubarb Culture for Louisiana. Ext. Cir. H-114.
- The Cabbage Season of 1923. Ext. Cir. H-115.
- Varieties of Cabbage for Shipment to Northern Markets. Ext. Cir.H-116.

Maryland University, College Park.
- More Tomatoes from Fewer Acres. Bul. No. 31, March 1924.

New York, Cornell University, Ithaca.
- The Family Garden, Ext. Bul. 74, November, 1923.

North Dakota Agricultural College, Fargo.
- The North Dakota Farm Vegetable Garden. Cir. 58, January 1924.

Oklahoma Agricultural College, Stillwater.
- The Home Acre Orchard. Cir. 163.

Oregon Agricultural College, Corvallis.
Growing Cucumbers for Pickles. Cir. 211, March 1924.
Rhode Island Agricultural College, Kingston.
Grapes in Rhode Island. Bul. No. 34, February 1924.
South Carolina, Clemson Agricultural College, Clemson College.
Commercial Grading and Packing of Tomatoes. Ext.Bul.59, Mch. 1924.
Commercial Harvesting, Grading and Marketing of Peaches in South Carolina. Ext. Bul. 60, March 1924.
Washington Agricultural College, Pullman.
Harvesting and Storing Potatoes to Prevent Disease.Bul.111,Jan.1924.

Departmental Publications.

Among the Farmers' Bulletins that will doubtless prove of value in connection with horticultural extension work are the following:

Farmers' Bulletin No. 829, Asparagus.
" 837, The Asparagus Beetles and Their Control.
" 879, Home Storage of Vegetables.
" 934, Home Gardening in the South.
" 937, The Farm Garden of the North.
" 953, Potato Culture Under Irrigation.
" 999, Sweet Potato Growing.
" 1001, Growing Fruits for Home Use.
" 1043, Strawberry Varieties in the United States.
" 1044, The City Home Garden.
" 1190, How to Grow an Acre of Potatoes.
" 1233, Tomatoes for Canning and Manufacturing.
" 1242, Permanent Fruit and Vegetable Garden.
" 1250, Green Manuring.
" 1270, The More Important Apple Insects.
" 1277, Diseases of Watermelons.
" 1282, Nicotine Dust for Truck-Crop Insects.
" 1291, Preparation of Fresh Tomatoes for Market.
" 1338, Tomatoes as a Truck Crop.
" 1371, Diseases and Insects of Garden Vegetables.
" 1394, Watermelons.

W. R. Beattie,

C. P. Close,

Extension Horticulturists.